

Drama News and Reviews

'Sunset Boulevard' Glitters  
At Last on Warner Screen

By Jay Carmody

Any effort you make to see "Sunset Boulevard," which opened today at the Warner and Ambassador Theaters, will be richly rewarded.

In making this enthralling saga of a faded feminine film star played by Gloria Swanson, Paramount would appear to have swept virtually all of the merit awards for 1950. Moreover, it has written a fascinating obituary of the movies' golden age when success was so cheap that cheapness became the hottest ambition of the industry.

"Sunset Boulevard" owes its surface fire to the inspired cast headed by Miss Swanson, but its lightning force lies in the production and writing genius of Charles Brackett and Billy Wilder.

There is the basic work of summing up Hollywood's whole raucy past, its bizarre palaces and the strange mad passions enacted within their mirrored walls. A dozen earlier and memorable pictures have caught excerpts of this eerie tale. "Sunset Boulevard" is the unabridged work which wraps up the theme and leaves the industry free to look ahead.

Instead of taking another look backward.

Miss Swanson gives the performance of her career in this ruthless satire on the era in which she was an early cinema queen. The role she plays is that of Norma Desmond, another queen, living in the mouldy ruin of the temple she reared to her fantastic boxoffice success, and dreaming her demented dream of doing it all over again. The sordid detail of her story might have been culled from those decades of sensational headlines which Hollywood wishes never had been written, but which now are turned into one of its really great melodramas.

"Sunset Boulevard's" heroine is a woman of insane appetites whose story is ironically funny as well as tragic.

"These have consumed many a victim in their day and in Norma's twilight they center upon a handsome, weak-willed young writer played by William Holden.

Here is a character made to order for Norma from the day he whirls into her Sunset boulevard driveway to elude the men come to repossess his car.

She sees him at once as heaven-sent, the male who will feed her the youth she lost and who will write with her the script of "Salome," in which she will make a comeback that will shatter a nation's complacency toward her.

In this soulless, mindless woman and a writer anxious to sell his soul and mind to the nearest bidder, "Sunset Boulevard" has an irresistible combination of central characters.

The reach of their relationship covers the whole of the movie colony. Norma's friends are few, a handful of gray ghosts who come to her huge haunted house for evenings of bridge. Her writing paramour occasionally breaks away from the great tottering love-nest, to visit the scene of his healthy failure and to seek out the girl (Nancy Olson) who might have saved him.

The nervous prying of "Sunset Boulevard's" cameras misses none



RISING STAR—Nancy Olson, young Paramount film player, is one of the important members of Gloria Swanson's supporting cast in "Sunset Boulevard," now at the Warner.

of the insane detail of the large slice of life the script examines. These go with Norma and her last new boy to the best tailors, follow them through the round of parties, observe the amour between the two in its most intimate aspects. Before it ends up with Norma's shot that drops the escaping young man dead into her swimming pool, the film has even gone to Paramount.

On this scene, in one of the film's most poignant, yet funny, sequences, Norma undertakes to sell C. B. De Mille, no less, that she is ready for her comeback as "Salome."

Miss Swanson, who never had a substantial role in her long reign as a movie queen, makes a masterpiece of the one that satirizes her era in "Sunset Boulevard."

Her Norma is a woman gone mad with vanity, an empty human catapulted into fame, unconsciously dumped into oblivion, and now trying to grope and claw her way back.

It is a brilliant and endlessly engrossing portrait she etches for this redeeming screenplay. It dominates but does not obscure the numerous others such as Holden's degenerating writer; Erich von Stroheim's ferociously loyal chauffeur who once was Norma's husband and greatest director; and Miss Olson's wide-eyed youngster who tried to save the writer from Norma and himself.

These are the standout performers in a huge cast adorned with the presence of many of the actual ghosts of an earlier Hollywood day.

Not in many a year has so large a cast and such extravagant production been utilized to tell a story of such dazzling drama that one forgets its few minor flaws.

ADVERTISEMENT.

GRAY HAIR

Brush it Away—At Home—Look 10 Years Younger  
It's easy! Now, with Brownstone, you can quickly tint streaks of gray to lustrous youthful shades that actually defy detection. Only a gray lock and prove it. See how, in one sitting, Brownstone imparts any desired shade from lightest blonde to black. Thousands thrilled by natural-looking results. Soft, rich, glamorous. Guaranteed harmless. Economical; lasting; won't rub off, wash out or affect permanent. First use must give your hair youthful color or money back. Get Brownstone now. 75¢. All drug stores.

Keith's Comedy  
Lets Grandma  
Have Her Fling

"LOUISA," a Universal release, produced by Robert Arthur, directed by Alexander Hall, screenplay by Stanley Roberts. At Keith's.

The Cast.  
Hal Norton... Ronald Reagan  
Mr. Burnside... Charles Coburn  
Mrs. Norton... Ruth Hussey  
Mr. Hammond... Edmund Gwenn  
Louisa Norton... Spring Byington  
Cathy Norton... Piper Laurie  
Jimmy Blake... Scotty Beckett  
Chris Norton... Jimmy Hunt  
Glady... Connie Gilchrist  
Dick Stewart... Willard Waterman  
Lil Stewart... Marjorie Cronland  
Bob Stewart... Martin Miller  
Stacy Walker... Terry Frost  
Joe Collins... Dave Willock

The adage that all the world loves a lover is being submitted to a piquant test in "Louisa," which opened yesterday at Keith's.

This is the screen story of a Grandmother who kicks up her heels, falls in love with a philosophical grocer, and steals the romantic play in a family that is driven berserk by her antics.

Universal-International which made "Louisa" has been so agreeable about its every detail that it may well work out that love does not have to be young to be attractive. Certainly when Spring Byington, Edmund Gwenn, Charles Coburn and the others in this tale finish their work, they have left the impression that love still is a funny thing.

Also, there is more novelty in the subject of grandma-meets-grocer than the movies have been leaving recently in the theme of boy-meets-girl.

Author of this switch is Stanley Roberts, who has not driven himself crazy trying to escape the formula for domestic comedy.

His characters are all pleasant humans who live a glossy life in a glossy suburb. The most engaging of them is Miss Byington as the grandmother who discovers one day that she and the grocer who quarrels with her are merely victims of loneliness.

To the consternation of her son (Ronald Reagan) and daughter-in-law (Ruth Hussey) Miss Byington and Grocer Gwenn start capering like a pair of adolescents. They see movies from the love seats in the balcony, keep late hours, coo the old simple-minded language of love, and finally stage a fiery spat over the attentions of Charles Coburn who tries to break into the game.

The incident of the film contains absolutely nothing that will surprise you but it is all acted with such amiability that it could annoy no one. Yesterday's first audience mostly feminine, seemed to find it very funny indeed.

Maybe "Louisa" is a woman's picture. J. C.

Where and When  
Current Theater Attractions  
and Time of Showing

Ambassador — "Sunset Boulevard"; 1:10, 3:15, 5:20, 7:25 and 9:35 p.m.  
Capitol — "Summer Stock"; 11 a.m., 1:45, 4:30, 7:15 and 10 p.m.  
Stage show; 12:55, 3:40, 6:25 and 9:10 p.m.

Columbia — "Shakedown"; 11:25 a.m., 1:30, 3:35, 5:40, 7:45 and 9:50 p.m.  
Dupont — "The Third Man"; 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:35 and 9:45 p.m.

Keith's — "Louisa"; 11:15 a.m., 1:25, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50 and 10 p.m.  
Little — "Dumbo"; 12:15, 2:15, 4:15, 6:15, 8:15 and 9:55 p.m.  
Metropolitan — "Tea for Two"; 11:15 a.m., 1:20, 3:25, 5:30, 7:35 and 9:45 p.m.

National — "Mississippi"; 12:50, 3:40, 6:05 and 8:40 p.m.  
Palace — "The Black Rose"; 11:30 a.m., 2:05, 4:35, 7:10 and 9:45 p.m.

Playhouse — "Panic in the Streets"; 11:20 a.m., 1:15, 3:20, 5:25, 7:35 and 9:45 p.m.  
Plaza — "Pagliacci"; 11:45 a.m., 1:20, 3:40, 6:25, 8:05, 9:45 and 11 p.m.

Trans-Lux — "Destination Moon"; 11:05 a.m., 12:50, 2:40, 4:25, 6:15, 8:05 and 9:55 p.m.  
Warner — "Sunset Boulevard"; 11:15 a.m., 1:15, 3:15, 5:20, 7:20 and 9:40 p.m.

AMUSEMENTS.  
AIRPORT THEATRE  
Drive-In  
8100  
US 1  
9:10 P.M.

"Daughter of the Jungle," Lita Hall, James Cardwell, 8:30 P.M.  
"Drums of The Congo," 9:10 P.M.

"FAITH OF OUR FATHERS"  
Paul Green's Symphonic Drama with cast of 150  
SESQUICENTENNIAL Amphitheatre  
16th St. & Colorado Ave. N.W.  
8:30 Nightly, exc. Mon.  
4,000 SEATS  
Prices: .90 — 1.80 — 2.40  
Box Office: TAYLOR 1875

4th  
Smash Week!  
"PAGLIACCI"  
"The singing in PAGLIACCI is tops."  
Washington Post  
Plaza  
15th & M Streets N.W. ST 8500  
DOORS OPEN 11 A.M. LATE SHOWS.

Moves from WARNER to...  
Starts TODAY Starts 11 A.M.  
Warner Bros. Musical Treat of Treats!!!  
Tea for Two  
COLOR BY TECHNICOLOR  
DORIS DAY · GORDON MACRAE  
GENE NELSON · PATRICE WYMORE · EVE ARDEN  
BILLY DEWOLFE · SZAKALL  
WARNER BROS. COOL  
METROPOLITAN  
F Near 10th

Guild Deadline

The deadline for renewal of subscriptions to the Theater Guild-American Theater Society Washington series, this season to be seen at the Gayety, has been postponed to Saturday night. The subscription office in Room 120 of the Raleigh Hotel will be open today and Saturday from noon until 5 p.m. to receive last minute renewals.

Casting Call

The Westmoreland Players will open their first full season with Emlyn Williams' melodrama, "A Murder Has Been Arranged," and will have final tryouts tomorrow night at 8 at the Westmoreland Congregational Church, 1 Westmoreland Circle. Rehearsals will start September 13 and the play is to be presented on November 10, 11, 17 and 18.

Amateur Night

The first of a series of talent contests will be held tomorrow night at 8 at the Viers Mill Theater. Ernie Tannen, WGAY radio announcer, will be the master of ceremonies. Amateurs who wish to take part in the contests should get in touch with David Ginsburg, Sidney Lux Theaters, 711 Fourteenth Street N.W.

AMUSEMENTS.  
LAST 6 DAYS  
PANIC IN THE STREETS  
AIR-CONDITIONED  
THE PLAYHOUSE  
15th & M Streets N.W. ST 8500

AMUSEMENTS.  
NATIONAL  
13th & M Streets N.W.  
ALL-TIME HITS!  
W. G. FIELDS  
BING CROSBY  
"MISSISSIPPI"  
MAE WEST  
"BELLE OF THE 90'S"

THE 3RD MAN  
dupont  
1332 CONN AVE  
Dupont 7300  
WALT DISNEY Festival  
DUMBO! SALUDOS AMIGOS  
LITTLE  
Ph 5t Box 146  
ME 1326

NOW BOOLED  
RKO KEITH'S  
OPEN 10:45 A.M. SUN. 12:30 P.M.  
Laugh Galore in  
THE COMEDY!  
HIT OF 1950!  
Louisa  
Ronald REAGAN · Charles COBURN · Ruth HUSSEY  
Edmund GWENN · Spring BYINGTON

AMUSEMENTS.  
3rd RECORD WEEK  
DESTINATION MOON  
Color by Technicolor  
Now At  
Air-Conditioned  
TRANS-LUX  
OPEN 10:45 A.M.

COMFORTABLY COOL  
First Washington Showing!  
The story of  
a Blackmailing Photographer!  
SHAKEDOWN  
starring BRIAN PEGGY  
HOWARD DUFF · DONLEVY · DOW  
Starts TODAY Open 10:45  
F 12th  
Loews COLUMBIA

SWELL  
In SCHOOL  
LUNCHES

Planters  
WHOLE  
CASHEWS  
Roasted Fresh 79¢ LB.  
THE PEANUT STORE  
1010 F St. N.W.  
(Opposite Woodward & Lothrop)  
721 15th St. N.W.  
(Between G & N. Y. Ave.)  
705 15th St. N.W.  
(Between G & N. Y. Ave. on 15th St.)  
KIDS LOVE 'EM

1010 F St. N.W.  
(Opposite Woodward & Lothrop)  
721 15th St. N.W.  
(Between G & N. Y. Ave.)  
705 15th St. N.W.  
(Between G & N. Y. Ave. on 15th St.)  
KIDS LOVE 'EM

EVENING PARKING  
40¢ 6 P.M. TO 12 P.M.  
CAPITAL GARAGE  
1320 N. Y. Ave. N.W.  
Between 12th and 14th

O'Donnell's  
SEA GRILL  
Tang O' The Seafood  
1207 E St. N.W.  
1221 E St. N.W.

CRAB  
IMPERIAL  
Friday Special  
Clam broth, Scallop, Saratoga potatoes, Chef's salad, rum bun, bread and butter, coffee or tea 65¢

Baseball time is...  
LITTLE TAVERN  
time  
BUY 'EM BY the BAG  
HAMBURGERS  
only 10¢  
Jumbo Hamburgers, 25¢  
For a Tasty Bite...  
Day or Nite... Stop at a  
LITTLE TAVERN  
SHOP  
40 in Washington - Baltimore  
Famous for Hamburgers

If there's a HOME  
in the back of your mind  
Then make a visit to Oriental Building Association and save our method of monthly repayable home loans explained to you. After you hear how the Oriental Direct Reduction Loan may be paid back in monthly payments—just like rent—your tears of buying a home will vanish. Come in and talk your financing problems over with our officers.  
ORIENTAL BUILDING ASSOCIATION  
Washington's Oldest Savings and Loan Association  
600 F St. N.W. ESTABLISHED 1861 NA. 7300

AMUSEMENTS.  
STREAMLINER S.S. MT. VERNON DAILY & SUNDAY  
50 MILE CRUISE  
MT. VERNON  
One Trip Daily 2 P.M.  
Adults 70 cents  
Children 40 cents  
Admission to grounds—Children 50 cents—12 free—Moonlight  
Nightly 8:30 P.M.  
\$1.00 plus 50¢ tax  
Children 50¢  
Davy Crockett's Orch.

AMUSEMENTS.  
SPECIAL EXCURSIONS  
TO INDIAN HEAD, MD. AND RETURN  
LEAVES 2 P.M.  
WILSON LINE  
7TH ST. WHARVES · NA. 2440

Marshall Hall Park  
Special Cruise To  
Baltimore  
DANCING.  
HAS YOUR CHILD  
DANCING TALENT  
DON'T NEGLECT IT!  
Special Introductory Offer  
This Ad Is Good for TWO  
WEEKS Tuition FREE at the  
Weldon Barr Dance Studios • 1735 Conn. Ave. N.W.  
Take advantage of Weldon Barr's 15 years in show business and 5 years successful teaching experience. Let him give your child that PROFESSIONAL touch!  
ENROLL NOW!  
Call AD. 0003  
Information Booklet Upon Request.

SUNSET BOULEVARD  
A love story... drama, real and ruthless... tender and terrifying. The story of young Joe Gillis, a Hollywood writer... Norma Desmond, a glamorous movie star, and Betty Schaefer, a young girl who loved Joe with all her heart!  
A Hollywood Story...  
A Paramount Picture starring  
WILLIAM HOLDEN  
GLORIA SWANSON  
ERICH VON STROHEIM  
with NANCY OLSON · FRED CLARK · LLOYD GOUGH  
JACK WEBB and Cecil B. DeMille · Hedda Hopper  
Butler Keaton · Anna Q. Nilsson · H. B. Warner  
Franklyn Forman · Produced by Charles Brackett  
Directed by BILLY WILDER · Written by Charles Brackett, Billy Wilder and D. M. Marshman, Jr.  
THE LAST TIME YOU SAW A PICTURE LIKE THIS BY BRACKETT AND WILDER, IT WON FOUR ACADEMY AWARDS. IT WAS "THE LOST WEEKEND."  
Warners Bros. COOL  
WARNER  
Opens 11 A.M.  
AMBASSADOR  
Opens 1 P.M.

THUNDERING WEEK!  
The Black Rose  
COLOR BY Technicolor  
Tyron POWER · Orson WELLES  
CECILE AUBRY · JACK HAWKINS  
NOW... Open 10:45  
Loews Palace  
COMFORTABLY COOL  
All the magnitude and adventure of a great novel is on the screen!  
20c CENTER FOLD

TODAY  
Open 10:45  
COMFORTABLY COOL • AIR CONDITIONED  
Loews CAPITOL  
Judy GARLAND AND Gene KELLY  
MGM'S SINGY, SWINGY MUSICAL IN COLOR BY TECHNICOLOR!  
Loews NEW MOVIE SEASON

M-G-M PRESENTS  
Judy GARLAND · Gene KELLY  
"SUMMER STOCK"  
co-starring  
Eddie BRACKEN · Gloria DE HAVEN  
Marjorie MAIN · Phil SILVERS  
with RAY COLLINS  
On Stage  
IN PERSON  
ARTIE DANN Clown Prince of Comedy  
THE BEACHCOMBERS Musical Tunefuls  
JAMES & BEVERLY PAYSEE Youth On A Spree  
NORA TOOMEY & CO. Wonder Girls